



## EFFICIENT INVOLVEMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES IN INNOVATIONS THROUGH EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

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**Abstract.** Systematic creation and use of human potential enables building and development of strengths of organisations. If organisations can fully use the potential of their employees it will affect their ability to succeed in competitive environment. Our paper focuses on open and broad communication, as it has a significant impact on both formal and informal labour relations, which, along with information share and knowledge continuity, essentially affect team creation. The questionnaire survey focused on finding out whether and to what extent organisations operating in Slovakia focus on communication. The paper also provides a simple method of evaluating the level of communication and engagement of employees in problem solving in companies. This method is a simple instrument enabling the conduction of analysis in a short time interval, while analysing employees are able to identify a current level of their company on the grounds of results, as well as they are able to identify bottlenecks preventing them in innovation potential increase.

**Keywords:** communication; communication methods; open and broad communication; research.

**JEL Classification:** E24.

### Introduction

Communication influences the innovation process in each organisation in a great extent. Many studies implied that a great amount of problems occurred during the innovation process is a result of ineffective or unreliable communication, particularly among different functional departments of the organisation involved in the innovation process (Cannavacciuolo et al. 2015, Pilková et al. 2013). It is therefore important to put emphasis on the development of open and quality communication. It is possible to use new technologies like “groupware” (group software), intranet or social knowledge networks for this purpose (Stacho and Stašiak-Betlejewska 2013, Stacho et al. 2013, Arogyaswamy and Nowak 2010). Teamwork activities and such aspects as communication and support for innovation can lead to group learning and making performance (Ceschi et al. 2014).

Communication is understood as transmission and receiving of notifications between two or more subjects (Moderní řízení 2006, Gubíniová and Pajtinková-Bartáková 2014). Notification is any subject of communication, arbitrary verbal and non-verbal facts and events having a signal nature (Papula and Volná 2012, Dudová 2014). Communication is predominantly a relationship, since at least two subjects are necessary in order to communicate (Moderní řízení 2006).

Appropriate communication should fulfil two basic tasks, particularly (Moderní řízení 2006):

- to exchange the greatest possible amount of notified content between communicating entities in a certain time unit effectiveness of communication,
- to transmit notifications between communicating entities with regard to the existence of disturbance (disturbing elements) with the lowest possible losses – reliability of communication.

Contrary to interpersonal communication, taking place between two and more people, organisational communication deals with exchange and transmission of information within the whole organization (Oblak and Zadnik-Stirn 2000). It concerns a great number of people and a great and varied amount of communication patterns and connections often occurs in it. Communication within an organisation takes place at two basic levels with regard to the number of people and amount of information it relates to, particularly formal communication, informal communication (Kampf et al. 2014).

If formal communication did not reflect management organisational structure it could happen that information necessary to solve a problem reaches a wrong recipient, arrives late or gets lost altogether (Remišová and Búciová 2012).

In relation to management organisational structure and adaptation to formal communication network, we can talk about vertical, horizontal, diagonal organisational communication.

Although vertical communication plays the key role in its management, horizontal and diagonal communication can be of great importance for its effectiveness.

Effective communication flow is especially important in cases when a character of work requires a common participation of several employees in solving a task, i.e. when cooperation is necessary (Arnfolk et al. 2016). It is also used when information flows need to be accelerated, better understanding of information needs to be achieved, and common efforts need to be coordinated. The more independent is work of departments in an organisation, the more urgent and effective is horizontal and diagonal communication. Generally, it can be stated that horizontal and diagonal information is less "filtered" than the information in vertical communication. Advantage is that thus obtained information is probably more complete than other types and allows an interpretation of its meaning on the basis of own ideas. The possibility to implement this communication supports openness in communication, which generally has a positive impact on creative atmosphere in organisations.

Organisational informal communication works in organisations through informal communication channels. It is a direct result of the behaviour of people as such. There are sympathies and antipathies, friendships etc. at each workplace. These contacts do not reflect formal management organisational structure. Transmission of different information from different sources at various places in the organisation takes place in informal communication (Horňák et al. 2012).

Many organisations do not approve of informal communication, as it restricts the extent of control over information flow and can at the same time significantly misrepresent information (or it can be made up). This informal information can at the same time contradict the formal one.

Development of excessive informal communication can lead to an increase in non-productive time, a decrease in time for working duties fulfilment (Urbancová 2012).

However, adequate informal communication can have a positive impact on organisation, as it can reveal channels which are covered but necessary (Majerčáková 2015). Informal communication is in many cases fast and effective, and at the same time it fulfils the need of people to communicate. Manager should be able to use these advantages of informal communication and look for ways how to ensure a higher preciseness of information flowing through it (Šujanová et al. 2012).

A number of discourses involving people with different experience in different fields or with different opinions take place in innovative organisations. Free exchange of ideas takes place through informal channels, which supports creativity. Openness between individual employees is supported by the positive motivation and example of managers of such organisations. Thus set atmosphere encourages discussions also about incomplete ideas, due to which a fast feedback is achieved, helping their train of thoughts (Franková 2003).

The role of managers is to increase the effectiveness of information flow through the formal communication channels of company's information system on the one hand, and to create conditions for effective informal communication in creative atmosphere on the other.

In order to increase the effectiveness of communication, managers can implement different organisation-wide instruments in the meetings of employees. Through such meetings, management typically interprets the economic results and strategic objectives of the company (Arnfolk et al. 2016). It is suitable, if possible, to create room for discussion with employees at such meetings. The frequency of such meetings is significantly dependent on the size of an organisation (Lee et al. 2016).

At the level of the management of a company or its operating unit, managerial meetings can be held, at which the most important information is communicated to junior positions through middle management. At these meetings, different creative methods, such as brainstorming, are suitable to use in order to solve projects or occurred problems, which will have a positive impact on the effectiveness of communication in the given organisation.

In order to communicate information to employees or the public, management can use a number of available means, which can also encourage employees in creativity (Duzdar et al. 2015). The most frequently used instruments include information boards, notice boards, intranet, company newspapers or magazine available to all employees, or a television or website available to the general public.

The main role of management in this area is to ensure effective sharing of information. The expression "sharing

of information” regards a situation when a source of information is available to several users, who use it collectively (O’Neill et al. 2015). It is especially implemented in team solving of projects, while the bigger a team, the greater demands on effective communication between its members. For this purpose, new technologies such as “groupware” (group software), intranet, internet, e-mail communication or social knowledge networks can be used (Chory et al. 2016). Social networking technology can facilitate the improved organizational productivity by enhancing the communication and collaboration of employees, which aids knowledge transfer and consequently makes organizations more effective (Kasemsap 2015).

The aforementioned shows that open effective communication is generally very important for success of innovations in organisations, however its impact is neither negligible in the need of involving the highest possible number of employees in the innovation process (Závadský et al. 2015).

Even in spite of the fact that innovation is often understood as a domain of research and development, marketing, design or IT specialists, each of organisation’s employees has basic creative abilities (Urbancová and Hudáková 2015). If there is a mechanism able to “target” such abilities in the right direction (regularly and within whole organisation) the resulting innovative potential can be tremendous. Even though individual employees can only generate restricted and incremental innovations the summary of these activities can have far-reaching consequences.

Successful organisational change depends on effective internal communication and engagement with frontline workers. Results suggest that participatory communicative strategies emphasizing employee engagement might be most effective in combination with programmatic approaches that communicate targeted messages about the change (Cao et al. 2016).

The concept of innovations with high engagement of employees has a positive impact on economic results of organisations. However, there is one more positive effect – the more people are engaged in changes, the more willingly they accept changes or they carry them out themselves. With regard to the turbulent character of most organisational environments, the increasing level of changes is becoming a standard and active participation of employees in innovative programmes can then provide effective help in effective implementation of changes.

The objective of the approach focused on high extent of engagement and participation of employees in innovations is to create the atmosphere where dialogue between managers and other team members has an important role. Interests of employees are respected in the issues related to decision-making and management. Such approach creates room for innovative proposals and ideas by employees, for work of innovation teams or improvement proposals programmes

(Stasiak-Betlejewska and Piasecki 2011). Employees engaged in the innovation process are perceived by managers as partners and their proposals are taken into consideration and supported in a significant extent by management.

These professional contacts, often very complex human relationships, are accompanied by a high level of uncertainty, as to behave innovatively means to risk. It is trust the employees get from managers in this approach that enables them to undergo a significant risk level without worries about an unfair punishment for possible mistakes or failures, which always accompany innovation creation.

Organisation goes through several stages with different involvement levels in the involvement of employees in innovations. In his publication (Tidd et al. 2007), stated *five building stages of the innovation model with high involvement*.

At the first level, so called *unconscious involvement*, people occasionally participate in innovations (e.g. in case of defects of a new product), however there is no formal process supporting such behaviour, which does not result in any significant impact for the organisation.

The second level represents first actual attempts of the organisation targeted at involvement of employees in innovations. Processes focused on searching and solving of problems are created in this phase. The ideas are implemented in the greatest possible extent and employees are subsequently rewarded, respectively otherwise motivated, which has a direct impact on their repeated engagement in solving of a new problem, which ensures fulfilment of objective of the second level – to *create a habit of the involvement of employees* in innovations.

Objective of the third level is an *interconnection of habit with organisational strategic goals*. For this purpose, it is necessary that a strategy is implemented, which practically means that organisational strategy is communicated within whole organisation, and is divided into particular managing objectives downwards, where all activities related to the involvement in innovations are directed. All activities carried out at the third level are still mostly managed by management.

The fourth level is characterised by strengthening of the competence of individuals and groups in experimenting and in their own initiatives, co called *empowerment*. The principle of internal aiming at the involvement in innovations is an important change, as it enables and supports open knowledge sharing.

Level five represents a peak achievement when *everybody is fully involved* in experimenting and enhancing of things, information sharing and creation of the actively learning organisation. The objective of the last phase is to create common values connecting people and enabling them to participate in the development of their organisation.

It is important to point out that each of these five stages lasts for a certain time and there is no guarantee that organisation can get at a further level of high involvement in innovations.

## 1. Materials and methods used in the research

In order to determine a suitable research sample, two stratification criteria were set out. The first criterion was a minimum number of employees in the organisation, which was determined at 50 employees. The given stratification criterion excluded micro and small enterprises from the research on the one hand, however, on the other hand, the justness and need to focus on a formal system of human resources management in companies with more than 50 employees were observed and especially declared by means of this criterion. The second stratification criterion was a region of organization's operation, while the structural composition of the research sample was based on the data of the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic (ŠÚSR 2016).

According to the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic the number of companies with a number of employees 50 and more was 3.261. The regional structure of companies with more than 50 employees is shown in Table 1.

Determining an optimal research sample of the given basic group of companies, Confidence Level of the research was set at 95%, and Confidence Interval of the research was set at  $H = \pm 0.10$ . On the grounds of the given criteria an additional, respectively relevant research sample for individual regions of Slovakia was set in the analysed years. It is shown in Table 2.

Table 1. Regional structure of companies with more than 50 employees (source: data processed according to the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic (ŠÚSR) 2016)

Region	Whole Slovakia	Western Slovakia	Central Slovakia	Eastern Slovakia
Districts	All districts	Bratislava, Trnava, Trenčín, Nitra	Banská Bystrica, Žilina	Košice, Prešov
Number of companies	3.261	2.005	644	612

Table 2. Size of the research sample for individual regions of Slovakia (source: own processing)

Region	Western Slovakia	Central Slovakia	Eastern Slovakia
Districts	Bratislava, Trnava, Trenčín, Nitra	Banská Bystrica, Žilina	Košice, Prešov
Number of companies over	2.005	644	612
Size of the research sample	92	84	83

Approximately 500 organisations were included in the research, however due to a great extent and the form of data collection only approximately 65% of questionnaires used to be returned comprehensively completed. Subsequently, 259 organisations, corresponding to the optimal research sample determined on the grounds of stratification criteria, were selected from these organisations.

Key methods used in the conducted research include logical methods, adopting the principles of logic and logical thinking. Particularly the methods of analysis, synthesis, deduction and comparison were applied from this group of methods. Mathematical and statistical methods were also applied in the paper. From software products available on the market, a text editor, a spreadsheet and statistical software were used in the research work, particularly including SPSS 15.0 statistical software for Windows®.

## 2. Results and discussion

### 2.1. Analysis of the open and broad communication in all directions

Within focusing of our research on the course and way of communication in organisations, we were finding out whether organisations have established a functional system of communication, whether horizontal or vertical, and whether they provide their employees the feeling of safety to such extent that they submit comments.

First of all, we focused on finding out the overall informedness of individual employee categories about organisation's formal strategic information. Answers to question: "To what extent do you use the following methods to communicate key information to your employees?" demonstrated that most preferred way of organisations to communicate key information to employees is verbal form, either at team meetings and meetings in 72% or directly to a particular employee in 67%. Written method is the second most preferred – in the form of either whole organisational electronic communication or directly to a particular employee. Least used method to communicate key information to employees is communication through a link element whether through an employee representative or a union authority. Some organisations stated that they also use notice boards and company magazine for the purpose of such communication (Table 3).

Table 3. Extent of the usage of methods to communicate key information to your employees (source: own research)

Extent of the usage of methods to communicate key information	%
Through an employee representative or a union authority	23
In writing, directly to employees	67
Electronic communication	51
Verbally, directly to employees	71
Team meetings, meetings	72

We subsequently focused on vertical bottom-up communication, mainly concerning provision of a safe room for employees to express their opinions about working issues as well as whole organisation. Like in vertical top-down communication, it is possible to use several ways, e.g.: employees can express their opinions to organisational management through a direct superior, trade unions, regular meetings and assemblies, boxes designed for it, surveys among employees, directly to a superior, etc. The research implies that methods mostly used by employees in interviewed organisations to communicate information to management are verbal communication methods, through a direct superior in 69%. Other methods are represented in significantly lower amounts (Table 4).

Table 4. Extent of the usage of methods to communicate information by employees to management (source: own research)

Do you use the following methods to communicate information by employees to management?	%
Through a direct superior	69
Through representatives	26
Through a personnel employee	33
Through a survey	20
Anonymous box	13

Whether an organisation provides its employees the feeling of safety in expressing their opinions and comments is mostly expressed by the way of their submission itself. In organisations we analysed, comments are most often submitted directly to a superior or at departmental meetings, where room is created for this purpose, or directly at managerial meetings. Unfortunately, the research showed that in 8% of organisations, employees either do not submit comments at all, because they are afraid, or 10% organisations have so called comment box used by employees to submit comments (Table 5).

Table 5. Most often used forms of submitting comments in organisations (source: own research)

Most often used forms of submitting comments in organisations	%
are not submitted	10
openly told to a superior	43
room at departmental meetings	30
room at managerial meetings	15
anonymous box	9

## 2.2. Analysis of the great extent of engagement and participation of employees in innovation

Within the analysis of the third partial objective, we asked interviewed organisations: “How do you involve people in

the innovation process?”. With regard to the fact that the key personal quality of “innovators” is predominantly the ability to respond flexibly to dynamically changing conditions of the environment as well as the ability to win and enthuse their subordinates and whole working team for changes, we were interested in whether organisations create sufficient room for involvement of them and their teams in the innovation process. The research showed that most of interviewed organisations, particularly 61%, involve employees in the innovation process only occasionally upon a mistake occurrence in new processes or procedures, and particular innovation has to be approved by management. 20% reported that they involve employees on regular basis, and they work on innovations without a common strategically focused coordination (Table 6). Only 19% of organisations reported that they involve employees in the innovation process on a regular basis with a focus on strategic objective.

Table 6. Way of involvement of employees in the innovation process (source: own research)

How interviewed organisations involve people in the innovation process:	%
occasionally, upon mistakes occurrence	61%
regularly without a common strategically focused coordination	20%
regularly, in coordination and with a focus on strategic objective	19%

Within the analysis of involvement of employees and customers in innovations, we were also finding out: “From what sources do you most often get impulses to innovate?” Answers to this question were significant for us not only because of the involvement of employees in innovations but also because the innovative organisation should get impulses to innovations themselves in the greatest possible amount and from the greatest possible number of sources. The research showed a positive result that organisations most often get impulses to innovate from their employees – in 61%. The second most often used source of impulses to innovate are customers, however the share of positively answering organisations – 47% sounds very negative with regard to their key role in the creation of competitive innovation strategy. Specialists were reported as third, in 40% of organisations, however it did not always concern a person hired by the given company, it is often information obtained from literature, respectively media like press, TV and the Internet. Almost 40% of organisations use competition, respectively benchmarking to get impulses to innovate. On the contrary, least reported were impulses got from cooperation with universities (Table 7).

Table 7. Sources of impulses of organisations to innovate (source: own research)

Sources of impulses to innovate	%
Employees	61
Suppliers	22
Wholesale customers	8
Competition (benchmarking)	39
Customers	47
Experts, specialists	40
Own research department	13
Cooperation with universities	4

Table 8. Questions analysing the sphere of communication in a company, interconnected with score evaluation (source: authors)

Questions and answer choices	Score
Do company managers attend meetings focused on the quality of communication in the company?	
Yes, yearly	10
Yes, once during the time of their work at a managerial position	5
No	0
Do they copy channels through which formal communication flows, and corporate organisational structure?	
Yes	10
No	0
Are channels intended for formal communication strictly followed?	
Yes, formal communication only flows through designated channels and directions	10
There is an effort to communicate through these channels	5
No	0
How is vertical communication supported?	
It is supported by managers and managing employees in maximum possible extent	10
Managers and managing employees of the company only support it in a limited extent	5
It is minimal and is not supported by management	0
How is informal communication in the company affected by management?	
It is supported by managers and managing employees of the company, and it is led so that no misunderstandings caused by distorted information occur	10
It is tolerated by managers and managing employees of the company, however its content is not purposefully corrected	5
It is suppressed and limited in maximum extent by managers and managing employees of the company	0

Table 9. The level of communication in a company on the grounds of a sum of the scores of individual questions (source: authors)

Feature of an innovative industrial enterprise	Your result	Your level
Open and broad communication in all directions	50–40	A
	39–15	B
	0–14	C

### 2.3. Analysis of the level of communication in a company

Questions focused on analysing the sphere “Open and broad communication in all directions” along with score evaluation of individual answers are provided in Table 8. The levels of communication in a company on the grounds of a sum of the scores of individual questions are provided in Table 9.

Within the sphere “Open and broad communication in all directions”, companies were divided into the following three groups:

A. Both formal and informal communications work perfectly in the company. Formal communication flows through channels which copy corporate organisational structure and are fully used to transfer all necessary information in both directions, i.e. from top management to performing employees and *vice versa*. Company managers use vertical communication at assigning tasks or specifying duties and they choose different ways of communication according to importance, necessary speed or extent of information. Both written and verbal communications are used, e.g. orders, personal conversations, telephone conversations, meetings, letters, circular letters, manuals, guidelines, etc. On the grounds of such quality formal communication, employees and teams can effectively fulfil their working activities and tasks. Company managers constantly support vertical communication, which is how they find out how innovations, tasks, activities, problems etc. are perceived by employees. Besides, formal channels also enable a quality transfer of information vertically between employees at the same level within a corporate organisational structure. This communication enables an effective transfer of information between performing employees, who provide each other information on the previous operation of a production line, or between individual foremen or managers of individual divisions, sections, etc. A diagonal transfer of information between employees at different organisational levels, between whom no direct organisational relationship exists is also at a high level, due to which information gets very quickly from a source to a target, undistorted. Informal communication is supported to a certain extent by managers and managing employees, especially in the sense that they try to specify information transferred by such communication so that no misunderstandings caused by distorted information occur.

B. Both formal and informal communications work in the company. Formal communication flows through channels which copy corporate organisational structure and are fully used to transfer all necessary information from top management to performing employees; however communication from performing employees to management is deficient. Company managers use different ways of vertical communication, i.e. at assigning tasks or specifying duties according to importance, necessary speed or extent of information. Both written and verbal communications are used, e.g. orders, personal conversations, telephone conversations, meetings, letters, circular letters, manuals, guidelines, etc. On the grounds of such quality formal communication, employees and teams can effectively fulfil their working activities and tasks. The fact that company managers only support vertical communication in a limited extent results in the fact that they do not have information on how innovations, tasks, activities, problems, etc. are perceived by employees, due to which a certain tension is created in the company. Formal communication channels also enable a transfer of information vertically between employees at the same level within a corporate organisational structure; however it is not fully used, as employees are not supported in it, which leads to a weak feeling of companionship of employees to their company. A diagonal transfer of information between employees at different organisational levels, between whom no direct organisational relationship exists is rather limited; information often gets from a source to a target through a mediator, which causes a certain deceleration or distortion of information. Informal communication is also supported by managers and managing employees, however its content is neither monitored nor purposefully corrected, i.e. information thus flowing is frequently distorted and misleading.

C. Formal communication largely works in the company, however informal communication is suppressed. Formal communication flows through channels not precisely copying the corporate organisational culture, i.e. it sometimes happens that information necessary to solve a problem is not received by a correct receiver, it arrives late or gets lost, due to which employees and teams cannot effectively fulfil their working activities and tasks. Communication from performing employees to management is minimal and is not supported by management; anonymous box is frequently used as the only way of such communication. Employees are afraid to submit comments or express their opinions, which results in the fact that information on how innovations, tasks, activities, problems, etc. are perceived by employees remain unnoticed, due to which considerable tension occurs in the company. A vertical transfer of information between employees at the same level within a corporate organisational structure is not formally supported, i.e. information always needs to

flow from top management downwards and back. A diagonal transfer of information between employees at different organisational levels, between whom no direct organisational relationship exists is not formally supported. Informal communication is suppressed and limited in the greatest possible extent by company managers and employees. It is reflected in avoiding discussion and any expression of own opinion. Employees know that if they want to retain their jobs, or advance in their careers, it is necessary to silently agree with everything their company does.

To reveal bottlenecks in the sphere of “Open and broad communication in all directions”, Table 10 was created, from which it can be particularly specified which part of open and broad communication in all directions needs to be focused on in order to achieve a higher level in this sphere.

Table 10. Reveal bottlenecks in the sphere of communication in a company (source: authors)

Number of question / answer	1	2	3	4	5
Excellent	a	a	a	a	a
Average	b		b	b	b
Bad	c	b	c	c	c

The proposed methods enable a complex communication process evaluation in a company in a short time interval, while the results thus obtained by the analyzing employees help define an actual level of a company at a given time. Individual levels are described in the paper. Based on this analysis, companies are able to identify the bottlenecks preventing them from innovation potential development. The proposed methods help illustrate what policy and philosophy are actually applied and potentially enabled by management. Management thus obtains useful information on both practical results and problematic aspects of their current procedures and activities related to innovative company creation.

#### 2.4. Analysis of the level of commitment of employees in innovations

Questions focused on analysing the sphere “High Commitment in Innovations” along with score evaluation of individual answers are provided in the following Table 11.

Within the sphere “High commitment in innovations”, companies were divided into the following three groups:

A. All company employees are supported by management in their commitment in innovations and different improving processes or procedures. All information in the company is fully shared by all employees, i.e. individuals and teams work on innovations in coordination, focusing on company strategic objective. Atmosphere supporting dialogue between managers and other employees is created.

Table 11. Questions analysing the sphere of commitment of employees in innovations, with score evaluation (source: authors)

Questions and answer choices	Score
37. Does the company show support for commitment of employees in innovative proposals?	
a) Yes, constantly	10
b) Yes, occasionally	5
c) No	0
38. What management style is preferred by company managers?	
a) Liberal, respectively free style	10
b) Democratic, respectively participative style	5
c) Authoritative, respectively autocratic style	0
39. How and when are employees committed in innovations?	
a) At every occasion with a common coordination towards company innovation strategy	10
b) Regularly, however without a common coordination towards company innovation strategy	5
c) They are only committed unintentionally (e.g. at failures in implementing new processes)	0
40. Are innovative proposals of employees checked and approved by company management?	
a) No, management fully trusts the employees	10
b) Yes, they are approved, however management fully trusts the employees at their implementation	5
c) Yes, they are thoroughly checked and approved by management	0
41. How does company management proceed if a mistake occurs at innovation implementation?	
a) The company tries to eliminate the occurred mistake and ensure that it does not repeat, employees who reveal such a mistake are rewarded in some cases	10
b) The company tries to eliminate the occurred mistake and ensure that it does not repeat, employees who are responsible for such a mistake are not disciplined in any manner	5
c) The company tries to eliminate the occurred mistake and ensure that it does not repeat, employees who are responsible for such a mistake are disciplined	0

Table 12. The level of employee commitment in innovations on the grounds of a sum of the scores of individual questions (source: authors)

Feature of an innovative industrial enterprise	Your result	Your level
High commitment in innovations	50–40	A
	39–20	B
	19–0	C

Powers of employees related to decision-making and management are respected. Managers perceive all employees involved in the innovation process as equal colleagues and they appreciate and support their ideas. That is a reason why employees feel the companionship with their company, and they willingly accept and implement innovations. Encouragement of employees to innovate is related to rewarding or other motivation of employees for their innovative proposals.

B. The company occasionally supports individuals to make innovative proposals, however communication of strategic objectives within the whole company is minimal, which results in the fact that individuals and teams work on innovations without a common strategically oriented coordination. All innovation activities carried out in the company are managed and approved by top management. Managers perceive all employees involved in the innovation process only as subordinates, i.e. they listen to their ideas, however they decide themselves whether to support the given proposal or not. Management trusts employees, which enables them to undergo risk at creating innovations without worrying about unfair sanctions from their superiors in case mistakes or failures, which frequently accompany innovations, occur.

C. There is practically no formal support of the commitment of employees in innovation processes in the company. Employees occasionally commit in the innovation process, however unintentionally, e.g. when mistakes occur in relation to a new product. Each innovative proposal submitted by an employee is checked and assessed by management before considerations of its implementation are initiated. Management's encouragement of employees to behave innovatively is minimal, mistakes are often sanctioned, even when they are unforeseeable, which causes the atmosphere of uncertainty in the company.

To reveal bottlenecks in the sphere of "High commitment in innovations", Table 13 (which is automatically filled in in Microsoft Office Excel following the questionnaire) was created, from which it can be particularly specified which part of commitment in innovations needs to be focused on in order to achieve a higher level in this sphere.

Table 13. Table designed to reveal bottlenecks in the sphere of the level of commitment of employees in innovations (source: authors)

Number of question / answer	1	2	3	4	5
Excellent	a	a	a	a	a
Average	b	b	b	b	b
Bad	c	c	c	c	c

## Conclusions

Key precondition for organisations intending to ensure sustainable development is a continuous development of its human potential, representing the ability of organisation to generate new ideas subsequently reflected in innovations, while ensuring the most important part – implementation of these innovations itself. Systematic creation and usage of human potential is a precondition of building and developing of strengths and competitive advantages of organisations. If an organisation wants to be “innovative” it should have several characteristic features. In our contribution, we focused on open and broad communication, since it has the most significant impact on formal as well as informal labour relations which have a fundamental role in team creation as well as information sharing and knowledge continuity.

In a questionnaire research we conducted at School of Economics and Management in Public Administration in Bratislava, we focused on finding out whether and in what extent organisations operating in Slovakia focus on communication. The analysis implied that organisations prefer a direct verbal form in top-down as well as bottom-up communication however employees did not submit comments because they were afraid to do so, or they only discussed them at the horizontal level in 10% of interviewed organisations, which implies a great insufficiency in communication and thus in labour relations. With regard to the found facts, we proposed a simple method comprising three steps (Analysis of present level of communication in an organisation, Definition of the level of communication in an organisation, Specification of bottlenecks in the sphere of communication in an organisation), based on which organisations will be able to analyse their present level of communication as well as reveal their bottlenecks in this sphere. Practical justification of the given part of the research is mainly seen in analysing of the attitude of organisations operating in Slovakia to directing and advancing in the sphere of human resources management. On the grounds of our presentation of obtained results, organisational managements have a possibility to compare their own present states in the given sphere with states declared by interviewed organisations and on its basis, to consider possibilities of its enhancement. Creation of the method is also considered as a benefit. We also consider as necessary to continue in this research in order to be able to enhance, modify, streamline and develop individual procedures on the grounds of new information obtained from interviewed organisations.

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## Disclosure statement

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